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Letter dated 13 August 2007 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith a letter from the President of the African Union Commission, Alpha Oumar Konaré, on the deployment of a United Nations peacekeeping operation in Somalia and United Nations support for the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would bring the present letter to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) **Ban** Ki-moon

* Reissued for technical reasons.

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Annex

Letter dated 4 August 2007 from the President of the African Union Commission addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: English]

The situation in Somalia is a matter of utmost concern to the African Union. On 18 July 2007, our Peace and Security Council met to review the developments in that country, and decided, among other things, to renew the mandate of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) for another period of six months. I am forwarding, herewith, the communiqué adopted by the Peace and Security Council for your information.

This decision by the Peace and Security Council came at a time of renewed efforts regarding the political process in Somalia, as shown by the opening, a few weeks ago, in Mogadishu, of the National Reconciliation Congress. While many and daunting challenges lie ahead, there is no doubt that the opening of the Congress constitutes a significant step towards an all-inclusive and genuine reconciliation process, which deserves the full support of the international community.

When, towards the end of 2006, the Transitional Federal Government returned to Mogadishu and regained control of large parts of the country, the international community as a whole agreed that this represented an unprecedented opportunity to restore structures of governance in the country, as well as to bring to a definite end the violence that Somalia witnessed for more than a decade and the untold suffering inflicted on its people. The decision by the Peace and Security Council, in January 2007, to authorize the deployment of AMISOM was aimed at seizing that unique opportunity. The extension of the mandate of the Mission is an act of faith in the determination of the people of Somalia to open a new chapter in the history of their country and a testimony of our conviction that the objective referred to above can be achieved.

Due to the serious financial and logistical constraints facing the African Union, we have to date been able to deploy only two battalions out of the nine authorized by the Peace and Security Council. Against this background, and given the volatile security situation on the ground, the performance of the Ugandan troops is clearly remarkable. We intend to take advantage of the coming weeks to mobilize additional support for AMISOM, accelerate the deployment of the already pledged Burundian, Ghanaian and Nigerian contingents, and identify other troop-contributing countries in order to reach, as soon as possible, the authorized strength of the Mission.

While these efforts are under way, I would like to, once again, stress the need for the deployment of a United Nations peacekeeping operation in Somalia that would take over AMISOM and support the long-term stabilization and post-conflict reconstruction of Somalia. Indeed, the task at hand goes far beyond the capacity of the African Union; it requires urgent action by the United Nations Security Council, which has the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. Should the international community fail to act swiftly in support of the ongoing process, there is a real risk that the modest progress already achieved in Somalia may be reversed, with far-reaching regional implications and further

suffering for the Somali people. Clearly, this is a prospect that the international community should avoid at all cost.

As you rightly pointed out in your last report on Somalia, a United Nations operation would only succeed if it is deployed in support of a political process, not as a substitution for one. Now that the Somalis have embarked on such a process within the framework of the National Reconciliation Congress, it is the duty of the international community to encourage them and provide further support in order to enhance the prospects of lasting peace and reconciliation. It is our hope that the United Nations will look at the situation with the required flexibility, bearing in mind that the political and peacekeeping aspects are closely interrelated and mutually reinforcing.

In the meantime, and given that the African Union is acting on behalf of the larger international community in Somalia, it is crucial that AMISOM receive all the support it needs to enable it to create, in the coming months, as conducive conditions as possible for the speedy deployment of a United Nations operation. It is in this context that the Peace and Security Council, in its communiqué, called on the United Nations, pending a decision of the Security Council authorizing the deployment of a United Nations peacekeeping operation in Somalia, to put in place, in consultation with the Commission of the African Union, a financial, logistical and technical support package for AMISOM, within the context of the provisions of Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations. To this end, therefore, I propose that experts from the African Union Commission and the United Nations Secretariat meet as soon as possible in Addis Ababa to work out the details of such a package, which would then be submitted to the relevant United Nations organs for consideration.

I would like to seize this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude to you and the United Nations for the support already rendered, through the deployment of several planning and other staff to support the AMISOM Strategic Planning and Management Unit. I am confident that our joint and determined efforts will contribute decisively to the restoration of enduring peace and reconciliation in Somalia.

(*Signed*) Alpha Oumar **Konaré**